

# TOWN OF DURHAM

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

LAURA L. FRANCIS



**Testimony  
Before the Planning and Development Committee  
March 20, 2019**

Support - SB-882 - AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ARBITRATION AND THE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (Governor's Bill) includes the following provisions:

- Increases the employee contribution rate to the Municipality Employees' Retirement System (MERS) by 2% for each of the next 3 fiscal years beginning July 1, 2019. For employees not contributing to Social Security, the current contribution rate is 5%, which will be increased to 11% by 7/1/21 and for employees contributing to Social Security, the current contribution of 2.25% increases to 8.25% by 7/1/20.
- Requires newly constituted Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) to make recommendation to OPM on a new tier for MERS modeled after the State Employees Retirement System.
- Calls for the neutral arbitrator on municipal arbitration panels to be selected at random rather than by 2 other members of the arbitration panel, which will provide parties with more confidence in the arbitration process and provide a more level playing field.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Laura L. Francis*